

# LOCAL

## VILLAGE SCHOOL CHILDREN'S BOOK OF THE MONTH

### Moon Over Manifest by Clare Vanderpool

Reviewed by **RISE RICHARDSON**  
Village School Director

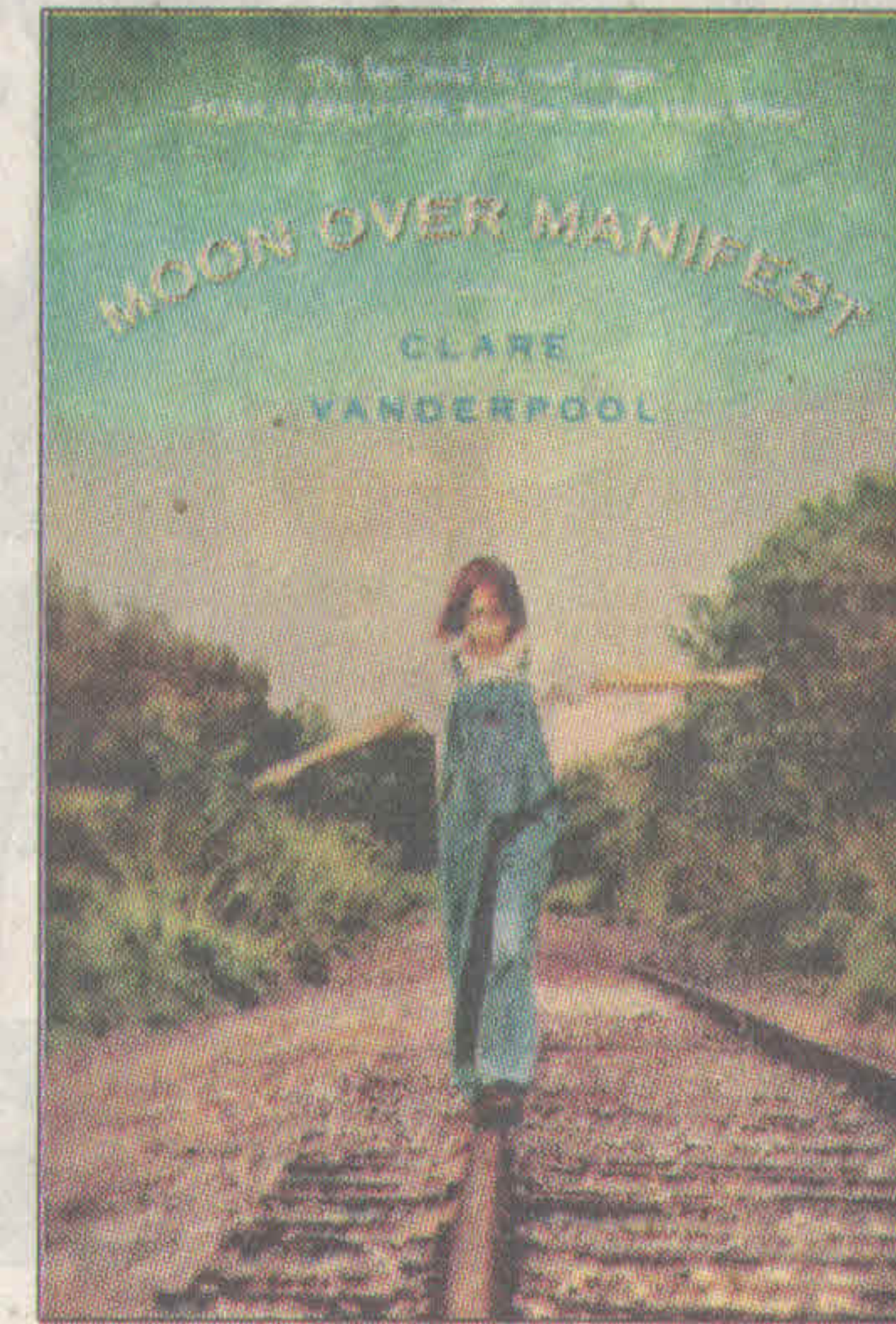
Moon Over Manifest, by Clare Vanderpool, is equal parts mystery, and a coming of age novel. In 1936 (the present in this novel) 12-year-old Abilene Tucker is sent away to live with a friend of her father's, in Manifest, Kansas. As early as she could remember, she has been wandering with her father from town to town, as vagabonds and train riders, common enough during the Depression. It was a life she enjoyed, the only life she knew.

Abilene tries to discover who her father really is and why he sent her away. In the town of Manifest, she makes friends, and stays with her father's old friend Shady, and



Rise Richardson

digs into the past. She finds a cache of letters from 1917 and some old newspapers and begins to connect the present with the past, with the help of



some new friends.

It turns out that none of the adults in town are quite who they seem. World War I affected and changed the town

irrevocably. The town is full of unique characters, many of them just one generation descended from immigrants. It's also a town run by the local mining company, which is up to shenanigans.

This story unfolds, alternating the present (1936) and the past (1917). It's well told and humorous, with a few tragedies mixed in. You can see the reveal coming, but it still catches you by surprise.

Like all good children's books, Clare Vanderpool's writing paints a clear picture without bogging down in details. This book is a good read for ages 10 and above, including adults. It won the Newberry Medal in 2011, always an indicator of a great children's book.